

<http://www.cooperator.com/articles/2583/1/Benchmarking-and-Energy-Audits/Page1.html>

The following are excerpts including quotes by George Crawford

Little by little, the world seems to be getting greener, and the Bloomberg administration has made greening the city one of its priorities in helping to reduce New York City's carbon footprint.

## New Local Laws

One of the major goals of PlaNYC is to reduce the city's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 30% by 2017.

Local Law 84 requires yearly benchmarking of energy and water usage; Local Law 85—the New York City Energy Conservation Code—establishes new, more stringent efficiency standards that apply both to renovations and new construction; Local Law 87 requires regular American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Level II energy audits, as well as retro-commissioning of base building systems as needed; and finally, Local Law 88 requires that lighting in commercial buildings be upgraded for energy efficiency and that submeters be installed in tenant spaces.



## Compliance vs. Resistance

According to the PlaNYC report, compliance rates from Local Law 84 vary across the five boroughs, with Manhattan coming in first on the scoreboard with 83%, Queens with 72%, The Bronx close behind with 71%, Brooklyn with 69%, and Staten Island coming in last at 39% compliance.

According to **George Crawford**, a principal with NYG Green Partners, a Manhattan-based energy consulting firm, a big part of why compliance with the new standards has been so good is that the mayor's office has made a concerted effort to reach out to building owners and property managers through letters and informational seminars.

## Putting Information to Work

**Crawford** says that while the process has taken some getting used to, the city will ultimately become greener. "Local Law 84 has taken root, and many building owners are now realizing the benefits," he says. "Prior to benchmarking, most building owners did not know whether their buildings were energy efficient

or not. Now with the benchmarking scoring system (1 – 100 with 100 being the best and 60 being the average for New York City buildings) it is relatively simple for owners to see where their buildings stand, and initiate corrective action when scores are low.”

## Missed Deadlines, Fines & Fees

It's important for boards and owners to note that Local Law 84 benchmarking is required annually. Buildings that missed the filing deadlines related to the first three benchmarking cycles most likely received fines and violations as a result. The filing deadline for the 2012 Benchmarking cycle is May 1st, 2013, which is now **extended to May 31, 2013**. Failure to comply with Local Law 84 carries a fine of \$500 per quarter.

As for the energy audits, buildings must comply with Local Law 87 on a staggered schedule up to 2022, and those located on a block that ends in “3” must comply by December 31, 2013, according to Crawford. In 2014, buildings on which their block ends in a “4” must comply next year, “5” in 2015, and so on. Crawford warns that those buildings that are due in 2013 and 2014 should start the process now as fines are steep. Fines for missed deadlines start at \$3,000 and go up to \$5,000, he says. The audit must be conducted under the supervision of an energy auditor, and the retro-commissioning study must be completed by a certified retro-commissioning agent.

Indeed, other major cities across the country are taking a cue from the Big Apple and passing benchmarking laws, says Crawford.

*Debra A. Estock is managing editor of The Cooperator. Freelance writer Keith Loria contributed to this article.*